



# **Annual Meetings**

## **Module VI**

# **What you will learn in this module**

- Why conduct an annual meeting?
- What are the requirements under state law?
- What are the election requirements under state law?
- What are the election procedure recommendations provided by the SCC?
- How does the board obtain new members?

# Why conduct an annual meeting?

- Under the provisions of Conservation District Law, each conservation district is required to have an annual meeting to provide the public full disclosure of financial affairs and district activities since the last annual meeting, as well as hold a public election of supervisors whose terms have expired.
- This event also provides a district with an opportunity to promote the conservation ethic, make community contacts, get feedback from the community and make known the accomplishments and future plans of the district.

# **What are the requirements under state law?**

- Have an annual meeting of all qualified electors within the district.
- Meeting will be held in January or February.
- Supervisors determine time and place.
- A legal notice will be published in the official county newspaper once in each of the two weeks immediately prior to the week in which the meeting is scheduled.

(cont.)

# **What are the requirements under state law? (cont.)**

- The meeting will be open to the public (K.S.A. 75-4318).
- Make full and due report of district activities and financial affairs since the previous meeting.
- Conduct an election by secret ballot for supervisors to fill terms that have expired.

# **What are the election requirements under state law?**

- Election is required to be held at the districts annual meeting in January or February.
- Supervisor terms are for three years (no limit).
- Conduct an election by secret ballot of all the qualified electors of the district present.
- A secret ballot vote will be used even in the event only one person is nominated.

(cont.)

## **What are the election requirements under state law? (cont.)**

- Supervisors and voters must be qualified electors. A qualified elector is any U.S. citizen 18 years of age or older, and a resident of the county.
- All supervisor candidates stand for office countywide.
- The results of an election are to be recorded immediately and reported to the State Conservation Commission.

# **What are the election procedure recommendations provided by the SCC?**

- Prepare ballots in advance.
- Some form of registration, or equally effective means, to ensure only qualified voters receive ballots is strongly encouraged.
- Promotion. Utilize radio, television and newspapers, as available, to publicize the meeting/election in addition to the legal notice required.
- Voter Registration. It is recommended that the definition of a qualified elector be posted at the registration table.
- Ask for nominations from the floor. Nominations do not require a second.

(cont.)



# **What are the election procedure recommendations provided by the SCC?**

(cont.)

- It is customary to nominate one or more candidates prior to casting ballots.
- A nominating committee may be used.
- No vote is taken to accept nominations.
- Voters should be given the opportunity to make nominations from the floor.
- District boards are advised to appoint a special committee or panel of judges to count ballots and report election results.
- Ballots should be maintained for a minimum of six months.

(cont.)

# What are the election procedure recommendations provided by the SCC? (cont.)

- Don't fasten ballots to programs for general handout.
- Don't have district supervisors serving on nominating committee.
- Do be sure person conducting the election (preferably a supervisor) fully understands the election procedure.
- Do accept a motion to close nominations after ample time has been allowed for nominations. In lieu of such motions, do declare nominations closed when it is evident no further nominations will be made.
- **Note: Presiding officer should ask three times, "are there any other nominations," before closing nominations.**

# How does the board obtain new members?

- While supervisors can be re-elected, potential new board members should be cultivated constantly.
- Try to keep board membership representative of all types of landowners or operators, community groups, and conservation and environmental interests in the district. The more representative the board is, the broader the base of support for district activities.
- Ensure you are addressing urban oriented concerns and issues. Also look at skills that are needed on the board, including interpersonal skills.

(cont.)

# How does the board obtain new members? (cont.)

- District board members should be selected based on their skills and qualities, not on "who's available that we know."
- Beyond knowledge in conservation, good board members should have management skills and leadership abilities. Good speaking and fund-raising skills would be helpful.
- A board member must be able to devote adequate time to the district. In addition, board members should be progressive, innovative, and open-minded.

(cont.)

# How does the board obtain new members? (cont.)

- Before a district begins to search for a new board member, it should inventory its major programs and activities, strengths, weaknesses and goals.
- Possibly invite local organizations to recommend a candidate based on these needs.
- Districts should actively seek ideas and prospects from groups outside their normal sphere of influence. Here are some suggestions:
  - Banks and charities
  - Environmental organizations
  - Advertising and marketing firms
  - Teachers and college professors

(cont.)

# How does the board obtain new members? (cont.)

- Before becoming involved with the district, a prospective board member will need to know what the district does and what programs and services it offers.
- One way to answer these questions is to develop a recruitment prospectus. This document might include:
  - **Mission and vision statements**
  - **Primary goals and objectives**
  - **Major issues**
  - **Expectations of board members**
  - **Benefits of being a board member**

(cont.)

# How does the board obtain new members? (cont.)

- All conservation districts should have a nominating committee to search for energetic persons who are committed to conservation and willing to devote time and effort as a board member.
- The board should have local organizations or leaders in the community serve as a nominating committee. District supervisors should not serve on the nominating committee.

# Review Questions

1. A secret ballot vote is not required for supervisor elections when only one person is nominated. True or False?
2. Supervisors serve four year terms. True or False?
3. Supervisors are required to serve on a new supervisor nominating committee. True or False?

(cont.)



# Review Questions (cont.)

4. A district annual meeting is required to be held in
  - a. January
  - b. February or
  - c. either month.

# Answers to review questions

1. A secret ballot vote is not required for supervisor elections when only one person is nominated. True or False?

*FALSE*

2. Supervisors serve four year terms. True or False?

*FALSE, Three year terms.*

3. Supervisors are required to serve on a new supervisor nominating committee. True or False?

*FALSE, SCC recommends they do not*

(cont.)

# Answers to review questions (cont.)

4. A district annual meeting is required to be held in
- a. January
  - b. February or
  - c. either month.

*c. Either month*

# Summary

Conservation district annual meetings are a significant event for a conservation district. In addition to meeting Kansas Statute requirements of full disclosure of financial affairs and district activities the previous year, the district annual meeting provides the district an opportunity to promote district programs and the conservation ethic in the community.

# Resources Available

- **Resources**

- Conservation District Handbook
- Conservation District Law
- “Proud to Serve” Recruitment Reference Book
- Supervisors Handbook

- **Where to find**

- Located in each district office
- Located in Chapter 6 of the Conservation District Handbook
- Located in each district office
- District office